

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY ATHENS

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FOR: BIC/OIM/MRD AND CAGNE/HALE; ATHENS FOR RTDO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, SA

SUBJECT: GLOBAL MARKET SURVEY - BUILDING PRODUCTS AND CONSTRUCTION
EQUIPMENT - SAUDI ARABIA - INTERIM REPORT

REF: JIDDA 8206

SUMMARY: SUBJECT MARKET SURVEY HAMPERED EARLIER BY LACK OF
ADEQUATE DATA FOR ANALYSIS GROWTH TRENDS AND EVALUATION OF
MARKET FOR U.S. EXPORTS. HOWEVER, OTHER SOURCES INDICATING
VERY EVIDENT SURGE IN CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY, SPURRED BY
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AND PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT IN REAL
ESTATE, MAKE MARKET PROSPECTS FOR NEAR AND LONGER TERM BEST
EVER. END SUMMARY

1. PERSONAL INTERVIEWS:	HELD	TO BE	TOTAL
	HELD	TARGET	

GENERAL BUILDING CONTRACTORS	10	5	15
SPECIAL TRADE CONTRACTORS	10	5	15
DEALERS/DISTRIBUTORS	16	4	20
BUILDING PRODUCT MFGRS.	5	4	9
TRADE ASSOCIATIONS	3	-	3
GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS	20	4	24
ENGINEERING & CONSULTING FIRMS	5	5	10
ARCHITECTS	3	3	6

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OTHERS	10	10
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COMMENT: EMBASSY PLACING HEAVY WEIGHT ON PERSONAL INTERVIEWS FOR MARKET SURVEY OWING TO PAUCITY OF SOUND STATISTICAL DATA. RESEARCHER HAS COMPLETED 80 PERCENT OF TARGET INTERVIEWS. BURGEONING OF SAUDI MARKET FOR BUILDING MATERIALS AND CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT EVERYWHERE SELF-EVIDENT AS GOVERNMENT PUSHES AHEAD WITH MAJOR PROJECTS OUTLINED IN SECOND FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN. CITY OF JIDDA, FOR EXAMPLE, IS SIMPLY ONE VERY LARGE CONSTRUCTION PROJECT, WITH BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS INVOLVED. WOULD APPEAR THAT LAND AND REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT APPROACHING "RUN-AWAY" BOOM PROPORTIONS WHICH NOT LIKELY ABATE FOR SOME TIME.

2. STATISTICAL TABLES: DATA FOR YEARS 1972 AND 1973 ARE IN MANY CASES NOT AVAILABLE FROM ANY SOURCE IN FORM REQUESTED. COMPLETE OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRADE STATISTICS FOR 1974 HAVE NOT BEEN PUBLISHED THUS FAR. HOWEVER, RESEARCHER OBTAINED SOME CLOSELY HELD PRELIMINARY DATA. ON BASIS OF ABOVE, ESTIMATED FIGURES WILL BE FORWARDED SHORTLY FOR TABLES I, II AND III.

3. TRADE LISTS: PER SPECIFICATIONS, PRELIMINARY TRADE LIST NOW INCLUDES 80 SELECTED FIRMS, EXCLUSIVE OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. FIRMS HAVE BEEN CAREFULLY SELECTED, INCLUDING CONSULTATION WITH EMBASSY/COMMERCIAL SECTION. FINAL TRADE LIST WILL NOTE THOSE FIRMS WITH WTDR ALREADY AVAILABLE. COMATT ALSO COMPILING EXPANDED LIST, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, WHICH WILL BE USEFUL TO ANY U.S. FIRM ENTERING MARKET.

4. STATUS:

A. DATA BEING DEVELOPED ON BASIS INTENSIVE PERSONAL INTERVIEWS. MOST ENCOURAGING IN TERMS OF FINAL REPORT WHICH WILL GIVE MEANINGFUL PICTURE OF SAUDI MARKET. PAST STATISTICAL DATA, PUBLISHED AND AVAILABLE UNCLASSIFIED

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ABLE, ARE POOR, INCOMPLETE AND PRACTICALLY MEANINGLESS AS BASIS FOR PROJECTING FUTURE MARKET POTENTIAL IN FACE OF PROJECTS WHICH ARE NOW PLANNED IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS.

B. PROBLEMS: WORK HAS PROGRESSED WELL IN SPITE OF DELAYS ENCOUNTERED IN GETTING RESEARCH ASSISTANCE ON SITE. ALSO WORK DELAYED BY VISA PROBLEMS WHICH

REQUIRED RESEARCH ASSISTANT TO EXIT AND REENTER
COUNTRY, CAUSING LOSS 5 WORK DAYS. ORIGINAL SURVEY
WORK PLAN CALLED FOR IN-HOUSE TYPING ASSISTANCE FROM
RTDO, BEIRUT, WHICH HAD TO BE CANCELLED. WE HAVE
SUBSTITUTED LOCAL HIRE TYPIST, JIDDA. PROJECT COSTS
HAVE RISEN SHARPLY - PER DIEM JIDDA NOW \$104.
REVISED BUDGED NECESSARY WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED
SHORTLY BY RTDO.

C. TARGET FOR FINAL REPORT IS DECEMBER 31. DRAFT
EACH SECTION OF REPORT WILL BE AIR POUCHED AS
COMPLETED WITH CABLE ADVISE OF DATE SENT.
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